

REMARKS

This submission is in response to the Official Action dated August 24, 2004. Claims 1, 8, 9, and 21 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-21 are pending. Reconsideration of the above identified application, in view of the above amendments and the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5, 7-13, 15, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,501,020 to Grant et al. ("Grant") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,326,547 to Saxby et al. ("Saxby"). Claims 6 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grant in view of Saxby as applied to claims 5 and 10 above and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,169,100 to Milicent et al. ("Milicent"). Claims 17, 18, 20, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grant in view of Saxby and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,951,082 to DiBiagio et al. ("DiBiagio"). Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grant in view of Saxby in view of U DiBiagio as applied to claim 17 above and further in view of Milicent.

The present invention relates to a flexible wiring and tubing carrier for slide-out rooms including an elongated strip of material with one end that is pivotally connected to the slide-out room or the vehicle. The carrier also includes a retainer feature for connecting line members, e.g., electrical cables, relative to the strip.

The Examiner states that Grant discloses a cable support assembly 10 for slide-out shelves that includes a cable management apparatus 40 with a flexible support member 42 having a first end 46 anchored to one end of a slide member 24 at one side of the shelf 22 and a second end 48 anchored to a fixed mounting bracket 28 on the opposite side of the shelf 22. The Examiner acknowledges that Grant does not disclose that the flexible support member 42 includes an end that is pivotally mounted to the structure, but states that Saxby discloses a strip that is pivotally mounted to a structure and that it would be obvious to one skilled in the art to modify Grant in view of Saxby to pivotally mount one end of the flexible support member 42. Fig. 2 of Saxby shows a cable management system 100 including at least three arms 202, 204,

206 through which cables can be routed using cable sliders 208, 210, 212. Arms 202 and 204 are connected by a hinge, and arms 202 and 206 are connected by another hinge.

Claims 1 and 21 have been amended to state that "(e) said relatively movable structure is translatable relative to said relatively stationary structure in a direction of travel; and (f) said first end of said strip is positioned in substantial alignment with said second end along a line substantially parallel to said direction of travel." Claims 16 and 17 also include this feature. The Examiner states that the ends 46, 48 of Grant's flexible support member 42 are positioned in substantial alignment along a line substantially parallel to the direction of travel. However, the ends 46, 48 of Grant's flexible support member 42 are positioned on opposite sides of the shelf 22. Therefore, a line connecting these two points is not "substantially parallel" to the direction of travel since the line is either: 1) perpendicular to the direction of travel when the movable structure is fully recessed in the stationary structure as shown in Fig. 1 of Grant; or 2) aligned at an angle to the direction of travel when the movable structure is moved outward from the recessed position. As shown in Fig. 3 of Grant, the line connecting end 46 to end 48 is at an angle from the direction of travel. Hence, Grant and Saxby do not disclose or suggest all of the elements of the present invention set forth in amended claims 1 and 21 and in claims 16 and 17. A *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established. Claims 2-7, 9, and 18-20 are dependent on claims 1 and 17 and are therefore also patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 8 has been rewritten into independent form and states that "said second end is pivotally connected to said relatively stationary structure." The Examiner states that Grant discloses a flexible support member 42 and that it would be obvious in view of Saxby to modify an end of Grant's flexible support member to be pivotally mounted to the structure. However, Grant states that the end 48 of the flexible support member 42 that is fixed with respect to the stationary structure remains in a fixed relationship with respect to the mounting bracket assemblies. It would not be obvious to make this end pivotable for several reasons. First, as shown in Fig. 3, it is advantageous to fix Grant's end 48 relative to the stationary structure since it allows the flexible support member 42 to be relatively straight against the corresponding side of the structure, thereby providing a neater appearance and preventing the cables from moving


excessively. Second, Grant discloses that it is possible to detach this end 48 of the flexible support member 42 to temporarily attach an intermediate portion of the flexible support member 42 to the belt mounting plate 32, as shown in Fig. 4. This adjustment would not be possible using the hinged joints taught by Saxby. Hence, there is no motivation to modify Grant's flexible support member in view of Saxby to obtain the present invention. A *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established. Claim 10 also sets forth the feature of "a second end of said strip being pivotally connected to said stationary structure," and claim 17 sets forth a pivot pin "to pivotally connect said second end of said strip to said vehicle structure." Claims 11-16 and 18-20 are dependent on claims 10 and 17 and are therefore also patentable for at least the same reasons.

Based on the foregoing, the rejections of claims 1-21 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) should be withdrawn, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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